



CLUSTER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Unique Features

This report reflects several months of data and information gathering and analysis by Cluster 8. It reflects key outcomes resulting from intense discussion, and documents its vision through a set of recommendations in the areas of neighborhood commercial, housing, job centers, transportation, environment, and youth development.

Several unique features and assets within Cluster 8 hold potential for attracting and retaining investors interested in reinvestment and redevelopment. While Cluster 8 sees the need for commercial reinvestment and redevelopment, it strongly articulated its determination to remain the strong residential area that it is. It believes that its strong residential feature is one of its most valuable assets. A brief description of the cluster's major assets are listed below.

- Serves as entry gateway to Detroit at its northern and western borders. This cluster believes signage and other forms of public recognition should be used to demonstrate pride in Detroit.
- The residents who make up these residential areas are viewed as strong assets. Residents are involved in improving their communities in a number of different ways. Their level of education, skills, and experience are strengths and resources for the community.
- There is a rich history of a variety of organizations going back two or more decades. Residents are organized through many different volunteer organizations working actively to improve their community. The area of this report dedicated to an organizational profile proved to be the most challenging to complete, indicative of the cluster's pride in its civic organizations and desire for appropriate recognition. The organizational profile is not all inclusive due to the abundant number of organizations in this cluster.
- Cluster 8 housing stock is some of the best in the city. Its neighborhoods are many and diverse. Stability abounds in terms of "old" homes and generations of families who have remained in the city. The strength represented in these stable neighborhoods usually is complemented by income that supports redevelopment and reinvestment.
- Mobility of cluster residents is generally high, with over 83 percent of households having at least one automobile. There are also major public transportation lines and routes running through the cluster.



- Cluster 8 is the only community in the city with a private park owned by residents. Residents sponsor numerous youth activities such as soccer, little league, and are booked months in advance.
- Existing areas provide opportunities for redevelopment that complement and enhance quality of life for cluster residents without disturbing strong residential areas. Opportunities exist for reinvestment in conjunction with residential areas that would benefit from new development.
- Invaluable work is being carried out by community development corporations and others. This work provides experience and resources that collectively hold great potential for reinvestment and redevelopment in the cluster.
- Residents in Cluster 8 are well informed and able to strategically promote these and other assets to implement the reinvestment recommendations they have formulated.

Recommendations

CRS required a review of existing and current condition information. Cluster 8 is well informed regarding both, but believes the significance of CRS is its documentation of critical information as an important step for future actions. Several important facts have been documented.

- Cluster 8 is a diverse, well educated community with incomes averaging higher than the city. Residents are younger than the city average with the largest percentage of residents being under 18 years of age and with fewer seniors than the city average. The number of married couples with children is almost double the city average, adding to the cluster's reputation as a desirable community in which to raise families. The ratio of African Americans and Whites also differs significantly from the city average. The majority of Cluster 8 residents are White compared to the majority being African American in the city as a whole.
- Community organizations are too numerous to list. This is a great point of pride for the cluster.
- Greater coordination between these organizations would likely prove beneficial in strengthening their capacity to act upon changes collectively.
- Cluster residents are mobile considering that 83 percent of households own at least one vehicle. They typically commute outside of the cluster for employment. This is desired



by most residents because they want to maintain the integrity of their strong residential community. However, residents within some pockets of the community, including Brightmoor and Redford Garden, would be most likely to need public transportation. Creation of a job center in the major industrial area in the cluster would help to establish more neighborhood-based employment.

- Several groups are involved in environmental issues but much more needs to be done. This report cites major areas needing attention, but several smaller areas and issues exist.
- Cluster 8 is the entry gateway into the city at its northern and western boundaries. Some groups believe signage is important as a way for the cluster to demonstrate pride in Detroit.

Cluster 8 developed 45 recommendations which are outlined near the end of the report. The following lists 18 key recommendations prioritized to focus limited resources. Three recommendations for each of the six issue areas were prioritized to compile the list.

Neighborhood Commercial Facilities

1. Work with the Detroit Police Departments Crime Prevention Unit to develop a crime analysis report, with recommendations for cluster-wide physical improvements to deter crime and improve response time.
2. Request that the City of Detroit Planning And Development Department take leadership with other appropriate entities to build a marketing campaign targeted for developers to promote awareness of unique and positive qualities of the community; create a program to attract desirable new uses for the community; identify priority areas for redevelopment and create parcel and block profiles; create a general information document detailing community and development site assets; develop a sales presentation and marketing materials.
3. Pursue major “update” or redevelopment of Grand Land Shopping Center as a primary site to include “new” type businesses such as Kinko’s, Office Max, coffee house, bookstore or telecommuter center as secondary sites.

Housing

1. Encourage community organizations and stakeholders to advocate and lobby city government to increase city personnel and provide better services; and to expedite the land acquisition process.



2. Create and build a marketing program to promote “new” housing in areas that have experienced significant loss in housing stock, i.e. Brightmoor, Redford Gardens, and other appropriate sites.

3. Expand and bolster neighborhood city hall to be a more effective delivery agent of city services and community concerns.

Job Centers

1. Capitalize on the cluster’s diverse workforce by creating a comprehensive job training center which includes training for entertainment complex jobs, service industry and technical training centers.

2. Encourage corporate sponsorship of affordable child and adult day care for working parents to remove barriers to work.

3. Identify community leaders, business associations, educators, community and faith-based organizations to serve as a pool of potential trainers and mentors at the job training center.

Transportation

1. Improve roads and freeways by re-paving, increasing signage and removing snow promptly.

2. Recommend and support legislation to eliminate insurance redlining in Detroit neighborhoods.

3. Expand United Way Community Services Special Summer Programs Youth Mobility Project to provide year-round transit of youth to jobs and training programs.

Environmental

1. Enforce ordinances regarding illegal dumping to reduce the appearance of blight and deterioration in the neighborhoods.

2. Clean-up brownfields within the cluster at the following locations: Outer Drive And Fenkell, Industrial Complexes, Schoolcraft, Telegraph Between McNichols And Fenkell, and Eight Mile Between Evergreen and Lahser.

3. Empower residents with the authority to issue tickets for violators of city dumping ordinances.



Youth Development

1. Encourage neighborhood groups and local grocery stores to consistently monitor the enforcement of the illegal sale and distribution of controlled substances to minors in local stores and the display of pornographic material at eye level
2. Create more youth mentoring and guidance programs through neighborhood schools and centers to provide “at risk” youth with positive role models and guidance through mentoring relationships, including those targeting youth ages 14 to 20.
3. Strengthen community and youthful users ownership of parks and ability to advocate for improved city services to help maximize park assets and ensure regular maintenance and upkeep of the park.

A review of the key recommendations in the chart below shows an emphasis on policy. This emphasis clearly reflects the cluster’s awareness of the importance of policy as an undergirding factor for reinvestment and redevelopment. Thirteen of the 18 recommendations can be described as policy since they are based on principles that should be followed. Four of the recommendations are physical in nature calling for changes in land, structures, and or roadways. Only one recommendation specifically addresses daily living issues, suggesting that residents have confidence in the quality of life in the cluster.

Key Recommendations

	Neighborhood Commercial	Housing	Job Centers	Environment	Youth Development	Transportation	Total
Physical	1		1	1		1	4
Policy	2	3	2	2	2	2	13
Quality of Life					1		1
Total	3	3	3	3	3	3	18

Conclusion

Cluster 8, like most areas of the city, is primarily residential with 70 percent of the land devoted to single family dwellings. Residents are proud of their strong housing stock and are intent on commercial redevelopment that enhances and complements residential areas.

A review of the focus of key recommendations reflects their strong sense of the importance of policy in reinvestment and redevelopment planning. Further, the limited number of quality of life focused recommendations suggest a general sense of Cluster 8 being a desirable community in which to live.



Neighborhood commercial recommendations target existing commercial strips for revitalization adding businesses that will offer services that meet the cluster's self-defined interest.

Cluster 8 clearly recognizes the value of volunteerism which is reflected in the numerous long-standing organizations that can become even stronger through greater coordination.

This final report can serve to support cluster recommendations related to marketing and can increase awareness of major activities already underway. The information contained herein offers further power for Cluster 8 advocacy as it continues to pursue its community vision and "passion for progress."